

In chapter of *Soul, Self, and Society*, Michael Rynkiewicz provides a brief overview of the various ways in which humans communicate with each other. With the plethora of variations of communication in existence, he undoubtedly portrays the difficulty in which humanity communicates among itself. Rynkiewicz quotes Samuel Johnson that, “The wonder is not that we communicate so well, the wonder is that we communicate at all.”¹ Among the many ways that people communicate with each other, he names a few methods such as through verbal languages, sounds, and non-verbal forms like symbols and body language. While languages can share roots, the interpretation and meanings of words, sounds, and non-verbal forms of communication can still possess different meanings across these mediums. Despite this, Rynkiewicz asserts that, for the Church, in order to communicate the gospel, she must learn the languages of all cultures and to build long-term relationships with its people groups.

This chapter is a reminder of the difficulty of communication in any form. This includes the communication between God and man. In His omniscience, God communicates to each people group and individuals in their own language. God, in His incredible love for humanity, utilizes every possible language that it has created to speak to it throughout history. Furthermore, Rynkiewicz reminds his readers that “language became a gift for humankind to use” when He commanded Adam to name the animals.² From the conception of humanity at the beginning, God intended for language to exist to glorify God and to be in relationship with Him (since God also spoke with Adam and Eve).

Two Questions for Further Engagement

¹ Michael Rynkiewicz, *Soul, Self, and Society: A Postmodern Anthropology for Mission in a Postcolonial World* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011), 62.

² Rynkiewicz, *Soul, Self, and Society*, 50.

1. How should the Church linguistically equip herself to effectively communicate the gospel with globalization in full effect?
2. In what ways can the Church look to Jesus as the example for the importance of cross-cultural linguistics?